628 is then thrown into the centre of the boiling water. The
695 slave champions then come forward. In turn each has to attempt to snatch the egg out of the water, using only the bare hand and arm to do so. The actual snatching is preceded by the chanting of the assembled wizards and by a protest of innocence on the part of both sides. Providence is expected to favour the innocent by blowing the steam away from their champion, towards the other side, and by some remarkable movement at the same time blowing the egg towards the edge of the pan nearest him. It is easy in such a case to snatch the egg out without harm. Burning of the hand and arm is taken as a sign of guilt.

This Nosu trial by ordeal is somewhat similar to that so common among the Chinese. With the latter oil is often used instead of water. The champions have to thrust their arms into the boiling oil, and the absence of burning is similarly taken as the sign of innocence. Needless to say, it is nothing of the kind.

618 When we got comfortably settled into Ah-Pooh's home,
621 and had got used to the light of the darkness, we began to find out a few particulars about the people with whom we were staying. We were told that Ah-Pooh had two sons living, five grandsons and two granddaughters. His clan of the Nhe family numbered nearly six hundred young fighting men. The neighbouring family, the La-chee, could muster fifteen hundred. All these people were very keen on preventing the chief Too, the leader in the great burning raid, from lording it over them. They were very anxious to know whether I could help them to bring about a better state of affairs, in which they could go about their daily rounds peaceably. It turned out later on that it was easier to help

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

them than we imagined. Chief Too also did not live very long after the raid, and the villages which we visited suffered no more from his ambitious projects.

The magic-lantern, the telescope, the camera and the tall Munchausen stories my companions told evidently convinced the people that the bear-like Nosu from the land of the sunset was a man having control of great powers, which would be very advantageous to those who were fortunate enough to gain his assistance. It is an amusing situation to be placed in, when those around you fancy you are somebody you are not. They wish very much that you should play up to the rôle they have in their imagination assigned to you. How many times in China has one been placed in such a situation! And how often has a missionary come a bad cropper when he has tried, out of the kindness of his heart, to be what his friends wanted him to be. I was only too willing and ready to render all the help I could to the hospitable hill-people, but the greatest of helps I wished to render them was not just what they were at that time wanting. There was an idea among a number of these people that if they could only get in a friendly outsider who was not mixed up in any of their land quarrels, and who wished them all well, possibly this disinterested friend might pull them all together and settle their constant tribal fightings which some were wise enough to see were weakening them all. By-and-by their plans unfolded themselves more clearly, and a scheme was devised which some of the wise ones thought would exactly achieve their purposes.

The first thing done was to adopt me into one of the clans and give me a Nosu name. This I readily agreed to, and was glad to be an adopted son of the great Nhe clan, rejoicing in